

Equipped to Exercise

Cardio exercise machines offer a convenient way to help you meet the recommended exercise goals at home.*

Start by reviewing the specific benefits of each type of machine. Among the most popular:

Treadmill:

You can burn more calories per mile than on many other machines – about 100 per mile walking briskly. You can adjust it to different levels of speed and elevation as you gain strength.



Elliptical trainer:

With an adjustable circular up-and-down motion, it's a cross between a ski machine and a stair stepper. It's easier on your joints than a treadmill.

Rowing machine:

As it works the back, arms and legs simultaneously, it offers a near total-body workout from a machine. It's not advised for people with back trouble.



Stationary bike:

This produces the least impact on your joints from a machine; it's most suitable for people with knee problems.

Read the reviews of various models. Check consumer and fitness magazines that rate cardio equipment. And consider buying used: You'll find many stores that sell quality used fitness equipment worth major savings; read user reviews.

When shopping, try out the machine as you expect to use it for at least 15 to 20 minutes. Explore the various speeds or intensity options. Choose for comfort, ease of use and daily enjoyment.

Before you buy, check with your health care provider, particularly if you have back or joint issues or other chronic health conditions.

*Guidelines recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, weekly. Segments may be as short as 10 minutes.

Meditation 101



Many people practice meditation to gain inner peace or to help manage medical conditions. A few minutes of meditative concentration can produce deep mental calm and physical relaxation. In the process, blood pressure and stress hormones decrease as heart rate and breathing slow.

People also practice meditation to help relieve the physical symptoms of several conditions, including asthma, insomnia, depression, pain and cancer. The American Heart Association promotes routine meditation to potentially lower your risk of heart disease.

Basic Meditation Routine

- 1 Pick a place and time free of distractions.
 - 2 Sit comfortably with your spine erect.
 - 3 Close your eyes and quietly take slow, deep breaths.
 - 4 Focus on your breathing or a peaceful image. Each time your mind wanders, gently bring it back.
- A good learning technique is to concentrate on your breathing.**

Try to meditate 15 to 30 minutes each day – during stretching or a walk, or while falling asleep. And when you're feeling overwhelmed, brief meditation can provide a quiet break.

“Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.”
– Vincent van Gogh

Traveling? Don't Forget Nutrition

Whether you're on a Caribbean cruise or a quick business trip to New York, you may not always eat right while you're traveling.

While you can't plan for every meal and snack, some simple foresight can help you eat well on the road:

- **Search** online to find grocery stores close to your hotel, and stock up on your first day.
- **Book** a room with a mini-fridge and keep nutritious snacks on hand.
- **Bring** some meal replacement bars from home. Trail mix works well, too.
- **Check** online for restaurants that interest you. When hunger strikes, you'll have somewhere to go.



Note: If you have food allergies or follow a special diet, don't hesitate to request food alternatives when dining out. Learn how to communicate your needs in the local language.



Some people joke that calories don't count when you're on vacation.

The reality? Long days enjoying all-you-can-eat buffets and sampling local sweets can add unwanted pounds. Instead of an everyday indulgence, try the 80-20 rule. Plan to eat nutritious foods 80% of the time, and leave 20% for treats. – *Cara Rosenbloom, RD*

Q: How to manage asthma?

A: Taking preventive steps to control your asthma can help you stay healthy.

Work with your health care provider to create an asthma action plan that includes lifestyle steps and medications.

Lifestyle steps: Clean your home at least once weekly; wear a mask or have someone else clean for you. Remove carpets and items that collect dust from the bedroom. Use air conditioning or a dehumidifier to keep humidity levels low. Learn to track your breathing with a peak flow meter.

Medications: Depending on asthma severity, drugs for long-term control may be recommended, including inhaled corticosteroids or long-acting inhaled beta agonists. For asthma attacks, short-acting beta agonists often bring quick relief. Severe asthma symptoms require treatment with rescue medicine such as oral or intravenous corticosteroids.

Schedule regular visits with your provider and get recommended care. Then you can breathe easy knowing you're doing everything you can to control your asthma.

– *Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP*



Carbohydrate Confusion

When you hear the word *carbs*, do you think of white bread and potatoes? Carbohydrates are often unfairly categorized as merely starchy foods short on nutritional value.

But that's not the whole story:

Many foods contain carbs, including fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, lentils, dairy products, nuts and seeds. You can see from this list that taking carbs off your plate can severely limit your food choices. Instead of avoiding carbs, know which sources are most beneficial.

Most foods have a mix of the 3 main types of carbs: sugar (simple carbs), fiber and starch (complex carbs).

Sugars

Some foods, such as milk and fruit, contain **natural sugars**. Many manufactured foods have **added sugars**, including white sugar, honey, high-fructose corn syrup, molasses, etc.

Since natural sugars come bundled in healthy foods that also contain fiber and vitamins, they are less detrimental than **added sugars**, which are the least nutritious carbs. The American Heart Association recommends you **limit daily added sugars to 6 teaspoons for women and 9 teaspoons for men**. That does not include natural sugars, such as those in fruit.

Some obvious packaged foods with added sugars are candy, ice cream, baked goods and soft drinks. But added sugars are also in products such as spaghetti sauce, salad dressing, whole-grain breads and coffee drinks.



Fiber

Fiber is a carbohydrate that passes undigested through your body. For good health, aim for 25 to 38 grams per day, based on your age and gender. Fiber is in:

- Vegetables and fruits.
- Whole grains such as rye, quinoa, brown rice and whole-grain wheat.
- Legumes such as lentils, chickpeas and beans.
- Nuts and seeds.

Starches

Some starches are better than others.

For example, choose:

- Brown rice instead of white rice.
- Whole-grain instead of white bread or pasta.
- Whole-grain or bran cereals instead of processed cereals.
- Skin-on instead of mashed potatoes.



Did you know?



Vegetables are carbs. And no healthy diet excludes all vegetables. Starchy vegetables such as potatoes, corn, squash and beets have more carbs than lighter vegetables, but they have fiber, vitamins and minerals. Just watch your portion size – a half-cup serving of starchy vegetables is all you need.



Smart Moves toolkit is at www.personalbest.com/extras/17V4tools.

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